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ABSTRACT

A research project presented at a workshop on academic advising on college campuses is briefly described, and the attitudes and practices of academic advisors from two campuses, obtained through an academic advisor survey, are presented. The project investigated the relationship between developmental academic advising and the cognitive growth of college freshmen. Unusually high levels of developmental advising found at two private liberal arts women's colleges prompted the development of the academic advisor survey; the survey's results are meant to help in the creation of a training componet to advisors from other campuses. The survey sought advisor attitudes and practices in 12 areas of academic advising. Through factor analysis, items on the survey were broken down into three subscales and are described as: (1) areas of academic concern; (2) areas of personal concern; and (3) maintenance concerns. Items listed under each subscale are arranged in order of importance as viewed by the advisors surveyed. Contains 20 references. (GLR)

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ED 329 182

ACADEMIC ADVISING

FOR

COLLEGE AND BEYOND

HE024 295

A Workshop
Presented by

Susan H. Frost

May, 1990

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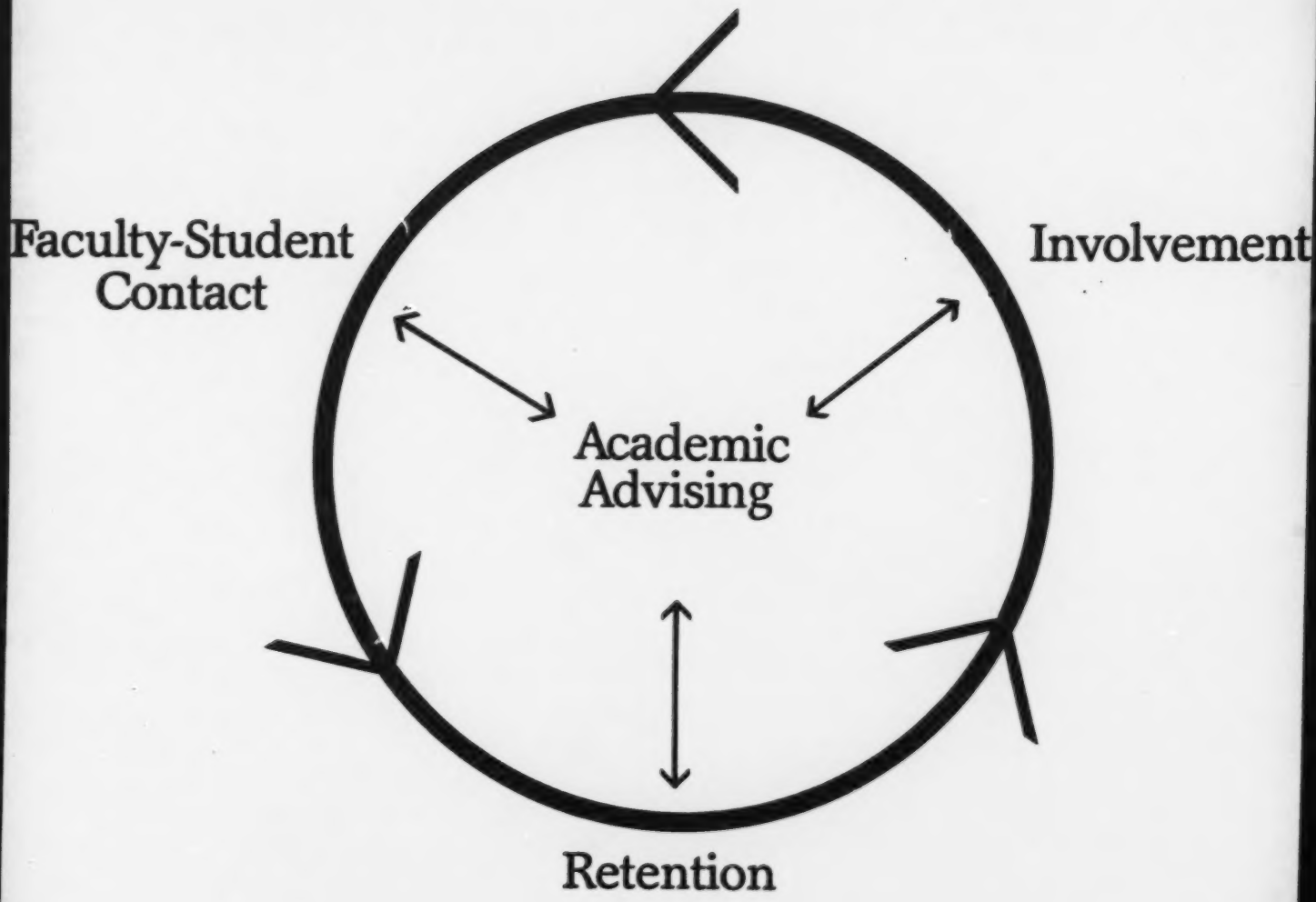
Research on Academic Advising
A Description of the Project
by
Susan H. Frost

In 1988 the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) funded a project to investigate a relationship between developmental academic advising and the cognitive growth of college freshmen. Freshmen at two private liberal arts women's colleges were assessed at the beginning of the academic year to determine their level of critical thinking skills. They were reassessed at the end of the year so that growth could be determined.

Freshmen at the two colleges participated in organized orientation and advisement programs throughout the year. While programs at both schools were ongoing, one program offered a more structured environment than the other. At the end of the year, freshmen at each college were assessed to determine the level of developmental advising they had received. Through statistical analysis the variance in critical thinking growth due to developmental advising was investigated.

One unexpected result of this research was the detection of unusually high levels of developmental advising at both colleges. To take advantage of this situation and investigate the attitudes and practices of developmental advisors that might be transferrable to other campuses, a new research project was funded by NACADA. The first stage of this new project is complete. Academic advisors at the two campuses participating in the first project were assessed to determine specific attitudes and practices that resulted in the scores reported by their advisees. Advisor responses were analyzed and a training component for advisors on other campuses was then designed using the findings. The second stage of the project is to offer the training component to advisors from other campuses. Those students advised by the participants will then be assessed to determine the level of developmental advising they report. A control group of students advised by advisors not participating in the training will also be assessed. In this way the effects of the training can be measured.

Your campus has agreed to participate in the second stage of the project. This workshop is the first step. I appreciate your willingness to attend and hope that you find the experience a beneficial one. It is my goal that you will not only learn about developmental advising techniques, but that you will investigate ways to enhance the academic advising experience both for you and your advisees. I look forward to your continued participation which will consist of a follow-up meeting next fall. I will also be available throughout the project should you wish to discuss academic advising or the project in general. Next spring your advisees will be given a short nationally-normed instrument to contribute to a determination of the effectiveness of the training. Your evaluation of the training will also determine its effectiveness. Throughout the project I will keep you advised of the progress of the research. Please call me at 404-534-6277, 404-534-6280, or 404-536-1616, or write to me should you wish to discuss the project in any way. My address is Dr. Susan H. Frost, Director of Institutional Research, Brenau College, Gainesville, GA 30501.


Faculty-Student Contact
Involvement
Academic Advising
Retention

ACADEMIC ADVISOR SURVEY

Summary of Responses
N = 38

1. To help students learn about college courses and programs the advisors questioned

   always direct students to the college bulletin.

   often suggest that students talk with the proper department chair.

   often suggest that students talk with the course instructor.

2. To allow students to participate in decision making regarding scheduling of classes the advisors questioned

   always talk with students about schedule-planning considerations.

   often have students plan one schedule and discuss it with them.

   often have students plan several schedules and select one with their help.

3. To encourage students to discuss vocational opportunities the advisors questioned

   always discuss developing a plan for decision-making activities.

   often suggest that students talk with department chairs concerning majors.

   often suggest that students talk with instructors concerning majors.

   often suggest that students talk with the person or office on campus with responsibility for career counseling.

4. To indicate interest in students' outside activities the advisors questioned

   always indicate to students that they see the potential value in participating in outside activities.

   always encourage students to become involved in outside activities.

   often engage in casual conversation about these activities.

   often ask specific questions about these activities.

5. To determine who has responsibility for advising activities the advisors questioned

   always discuss generally the responsibilities of the advisor and the student.

   often discuss specifically the responsibilities of the advisor and the student.

   often indicate the responsibilities of each by action rather than discussion.

6. To help students with decisions the advisors questioned

   always invite students to come to them specifically to discuss problems.

   often use the advising relationship to model problem-solving skills.

   often discuss general problem-solving skills with students.

7. To help students learn about time management the advisors questioned

   always talk with students specifically about time management.

   often ask students about their time management skills in casual conversation.

   often suggest sources for students to learn about time management.

8. To help students develop effective study habits the advisors questioned

   always talks to students specifically about study habits.

   often discuss study skills in casual conversation.

   often refer students to the person or office on campus with responsibility for academic support services.

9. To help students consider their choice of major the advisors questioned

   always suggest that students talk to faculty members in various departments that interest them.

   often suggest that students consult the career planning office.

   often suggest that students talk with other students in the departments that interest them.

   often explore choices of majors with students themselves.

10. To engage students in discussion about other-than-academic interests and plans the advisors questioned

    always have general discussions about outside activities.

    often have specific discussions about outside activities.

11. To keep students informed of their academic progress the advisors questioned

    always review students' progress when discussing the next term's schedule.

    often make specific appointments with students to review their progress.

    often review students' progress in casual meetings.

12. To assist students in identifying realistic academic goals the advisors questioned

    always get information about previous academic performance from high school transcripts.

    always get information from entering test scores (SAT or Act).

    often ask specifically about students' past academic performance.

Through factor analysis of advisor's responses, item on the survey were divided into three subscales. They can be described as 1) areas of academic concern, 2) areas of personal concern, and 3) maintenance concerns.

The areas of academic concern rated as important or very important by advisors are:

evaluation of academic progress

discussing the purpose of a college education

discussing career alternatives

discussing dismissal from college

discussing special academic programs

discussing internship opportunities

Areas of individual concern rated as important or very important are:

getting to know each other

discussing time management

discussing personal goals

discussing course content

discussing setting personal goals

Maintenance activities considered important or very important are:

signing forms

discussing the drop/add procedure

selecting courses

planning schedules

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